

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a current satellite TV subscriber in a rural town who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of Echo Star and DIRECTV. I was told by various people, at various companies, that

I would have no problems receiving local channels, so I ordered DirecTV. However, much to my disappointment, my household is only able to receive on one local station - NBC. All others have denied us access. FOX-CT has claimed that they will not grant us a waiver because they would not be the ones supplying the channel - FOX-NY would be the supplier. And of course FOX-NY won't supply us because we do not live in NY. I live near a mountain range, so our antenna does not receive adequate signals and we therefore cannot receive any local stations even through our regular television. Also, there are no companies (that I have found) that will provide high speed internet to my home, which means I am stuck with the 56K modem I currently have.

The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make satellite television a strong alternative to cable in our community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

Heather Desmarais
6 Country Club Drive
Hampden, MA 01036